1: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

623 651 The most important and delicate topic of discussion at meetings is always the subject of taxes. These taxes are decreed by the T'u-ssu as a lump sum imposed on the entire village. The villagers have then to group themselves by wealth in five classes and to pay more or less taxes according to this classification. The classification of families is a very difficult and delicate problem. In the discussion everybody asserts that he is, and proves himself to be, the poorest man in the village, deserving to be put in the lowest classification. The tax imposed on the village is compared with the taxes on other villages, and the chief of the village is criticized for not having defended the interests of his village. These meetings also fix the date on which the taxes have to be ready either to be carried by the villagers in a group to the mansion of the T'u-ssu, or to be ready for the nobles who come to collect them. Illegal and oppressive exactions by the officials of the T'u-ssu and difficulties with the collecting nobles are discussed, and entrusted to the chief of the village for redress or for conciliation with the T'u-ssu.

623 312 Another important topic is the digging or repairing of irrigation canals. The number of digging days required from each family is adjusted to the amount of land each family cultivates. Quarrels are patched up with families accused of having kept the water from the canal turned into their fields for longer than the allotted time. The proper time is calculated by the time taken to burn a certain number of incense sticks for the irrigation of a determined acreage of fields.

623 651 794 At these meetings the contributions of every family are fixed for the expenses of keeping the village temple in repair and payments to the shamans who perform the two important rites of spring and of protection against storms and hail, and of thanksgiving for the harvest.[4] An apportionment is also made of the liability of members for all kinds of corvées, or obligatory services, religious as well as administrative. The groups of youngsters must be ready day and night to stay in and even sleep in the temple in order to avert the danger of hail and storms in summer. Duties must be assigned also for taking care of the sacred animal of the village, and for preparing the performance of all kinds of religious rites carried out on behalf of the village. Villagers must also be designated for all kinds of corvée service at the mansion of the T'u-ssu.

622 627 The officials must also be prepared to deal with all kinds of problems in the private lives of the villagers (except family vengeance feuds). If a villager has got himself into difficulties or is burdened with troubles not of his own making he goes to the chief of the village, presents to him a scarf of felicity and a bottle of wine, and invites him to iron out the problem. The chief

[4] The religious aspects of Monguor life will be discussed in a second volume, now being prepared for publication.

622 sends one of his assistants to invite the elders and summons the defendant. If the problem is important, 627 the military commanders are also invited. Problems of this kind include delimitation of the boundaries of fields—a kind of arbitration case often made necessary by contracts drafted ambiguously by incapable men. Cases of dividing a paternal inheritance are often laborious and consume many days. The whole community is [681] interested in such cases. In personal quarrels, disputes, and fights the offending party may be flogged with up to one hundred stripes. If the complainant has been wounded, the defendant is condemned, in addition, to defray the expenses for the doctor and for medicine and to pay indemnity for a fixed number of days of recuperation.

685 Stealing seems to be an ineradicable evil among the Monguors, and stealing of animals is the worst of all. The Monguors still seem to have the old attitude toward thieving and the stealing of animals, although thieves are severely punished. Among the neighboring nomads, when a man is caught red-handed stealing animals, he is taken to a lonely spot, the tendons of his ankle joints are cut, and he is left, crippled, to die on the spot. The nomads show no pity for cattle thieves. The Monguors do not punish as cruelly and do not inflict capital punishment, but the thief has his hands bound behind his back and is then hung by the thumbs, until he loses consciousness. Water is then poured on his head. When he recovers consciousness, the same sport is repeated two or three times. He is then flogged with up to five hundred stripes, or even more. If a thief is caught the second time, he is sent to the T'u-ssu's prison, and when he emerges from jail, he is a wreck of his former self—provided he escapes at all, by bribing the guards.

People who steal sheaves from the field at harvest time are flogged with up to fifty or one hundred stripes and [865] are led through the village, the sheaves on their back, crying the whole way long that they are guilty. Boys accused by their parents of disobedience are flogged in the same way, after having been forced to apologize to their parents.

684 In cases of adultery the guilty pair, if caught *in flagrante delictu*, are flogged with up to one hundred stripes or more. The woman is beaten on her bare back with rawhide lash, the man on his bare buttocks and thighs. Apologies are made to the injured husband. A sheep or pig is brought to his home. Fire crackers are set off. The guilty pair ask a guarantor to speak for their proper conduct in the future. An official statement is written attesting the fact of adultery and the supplication for pardon. The two guilty persons place their right thumbs on an inked pad and then make an impression with the thumb on the statement. They are then led through the village, two drums beating before them, while they confess their guilt.

Once in a while a young woman runs away from her

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684 husband—or rather, usually, from her mother-in-law. When brought back she endures one hundred lashes on the back, and is led to her husband's house with the same "ceremonial" as related above, after having asked for a guarantor and made her thumb-print on a statement.

585 Once in a while, also, a future son-in-law who is working for his future father-in-law, in order to marry the daughter, disappears with the daughter. After one or two years they return, and ordinarily the parents are delighted to see them again, and no more complaints are made.

525 681 543 In cases of gambling, a fine is imposed on the offenders for the upkeep of the temple or to defray the expenses of the religious celebrations performed by the shaman at the village in spring and autumn. All kinds of interesting and dramatic cases occur. Wives complain about their husbands; widows who do not intend to remarry complain about members of the family prodding and teasing them to remarry; widows willing to remarry are hindered from remarrying; or the price for a bride is not paid at the fixed time; or a betrothal is broken off, etc.

•627 Two particular cases may be described in detail, because of the light they cast on the type of cases handled by chiefs and elders, and on Monguor society in general.

In the first case, in the valley of Hungnai, in 1918, Chang Chia-pa, a Chinese whose family had been enrolled in a Monguor clan for many generations, had a daughter married "with the girdle" [5] who was the mother of a lovely boy. He also had a son, a daughter-in-law, and grandchildren. The girl of the girdle, who was always having trouble with her sister-in-law, finally could not stand any more, married a man named Hou Yu-liang as his concubine, and took her son with her. Hou paid her father four hundred strings of cash for her.

After five or six years, during the festivities held at the second moon in Weiyuanp'u, a Chinese peddler from Ho-nan province, named Li, made trouble with Hou Yu-liang for having, as he complained, married the

585 [5] When a girl who is unwilling to marry has relations with a guest, custom requires that the guest present his girdle (sash) to the girl. In the event that she subsequently becomes pregnant, she performs the rites of marriage with the sash, and she is thenceforth known as "Mrs. So-and-So" (guest's name), and the son as "boy so-and-so," even if the guest never comes back during her whole life.

The importance of the girdle is worth noting. Among the Mongols of the Ordos, according to Fr. Mostaert, when on the day set for the marriage the groom falls ill and is unable to attend the ceremony, his girdle is sent to the bride and she performs the rite of marriage with it. I never met such a case among the Monguors, and it appears that the girdle is used among the Ordos Mongols in circumstances quite different from those in which it is used among the Monguors. We note also that kidnapped widows prove before the court of the village their unwillingness to marry so-and-so by showing the girdle which was exchanged with so-and-so. Father Mostaert told me that when shamans in the Ordos perform their rites, removal of the girdle is one of the most important acts. This custom is unknown among the Monguor shamans.

[p. 786]

1: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

627 mother of his son. The peddler was accompanied by the brother of the girl's father who had a grudge against him. The girl of the girdle did not even recognize the peddler, but since her son had always been called Li, and since she herself had for five or six years always been called Mrs. Li, the peddler, with the girl's uncle as "witness," threatened to accuse her and her husband in a Chinese court. Hou, afraid of the terrible expenses consequent on involvement in a Chinese court action—which in any case might not save him his beloved concubine—preferred to settle the trouble by compromise. He invited the chief of the village and the elders, his maternal uncle and some of his friends, and after a long "interesting" meeting, crowded with the most ticklish details, it was decided that Hou should pay 160 strings of cash to the presumed father and apologize, bringing the traditional offering of a sheep with paper pasted on its horns and a piece of red cloth on its back—all to the accompaniment of firecrackers.

583 627 The second case concerned the kidnapping of a widow. In theory it is up to a widow to make her own decision about a second marriage, but at the same time the custom exists of kidnapping the widow when she is conducted at night to the home of her second husband. In Supokou [6] lived the widow of Hla Reng. A man named Chang, of Ch'ichialin, who intended to marry her, heard that she had already consented to marry a man named Li, and that they had exchanged girdles as tokens of their mutual consent.

Chang, unwilling to give up the widow, called together thirty or more youngsters with clubs, in order to kidnap her on her way to her second husband. But having been misled about the day of her departure, and finding no widow along the road, Chang and his gang decided that she must be still at her old home, and resolved to kidnap her there. Among the kidnappers was her own nephew, who being familiar with the house of his aunt was charged with keeping the watchdog quiet. The group entered, smashing the door, and at the same time the candle inside the room was blown out. The woman was hurriedly seized and gagged, and a piece of red cloth wrapped around her head. Four men carried her out and lifted her onto a mule. A man jumped up behind her on the mule, holding her around the body, and the armed group in deep silence, at full speed, riding by side roads, in the dead of night, reached the home of Chang.

Then, consternation! The nephew recognized that the kidnapped woman was not his aunt, but the wife of a neighbor who had been staying for a few days with the widow. In the scurry and confusion, the widow had hidden herself in the corner of the room under some sacks. The whole group apologized and offered to take

[6] A name probably meaning "Needle Valley," from Monguor *subuge*, "needle" (de Smedt and Mostaert, *Dictionnaire*); but possibly from Mongol *subag*, "a canal."—O. L.

[P. 79a]

1: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

583 the woman back to her husband that very same night. But the clever woman refused, and nobody dared to •627 touch her again. At dawn the funny story spread like a prairie fire all over the country. The most stoic elders who had not laughed for years burst into peals of merriment. The chief of the village and the elders restrained the furious husband from bringing an action at the Chinese court. On the threshing floor the problem was tackled with the whole village in attendance. The decision was that the wife should be brought back home, preceded by a group of musicians and a sheep with paper pasted on its horns, a piece of red cloth on its back and firecrackers going off all along the road, and that a dinner should be prepared for the husband, the chief of the village and the elders.

An elder of the village, a celebrated patcher-up of troubles, told me that cases of kidnapping are usually not so dramatic. Most of the time, if a widow is being compelled to marry a man she does not like, and if she already has a man friend, she notifies him about the time and the circumstances of her departure, and he kidnaps her on the way, often after a severe fight. Later, on the threshing floor, after she has testified that she will marry her friend and that they have already exchanged girdles, the friend is required to reimburse the disappointed suitor for all his expenses and whatever part of the bride price he has already paid for the widow. (The marriage price for a widow is paid in two installments, one before she leaves home and one after she has reached the home of her new husband.) But when a widow is kidnapped against her own will, and refuses to marry the kidnapper, the decision made on the threshing floor by the chief of the village and the elders goes in her favor.

627 All cases are exposed and discussed in the open air, with all the villagers in attendance including youngsters and children, who thus get their social and family education through naked facts. The veil of privacy is ripped from all the miseries and realities of life before the eyes of the young, who are more sophisticated in such social knowledge than people in the Western world. A record of each case is filed in the "archives" of the chief of the village, and four strings of cash are set aside, to be offered to the T'u-ssu at the time of his triennial visit.

623 In most villages the influence wielded by the elders is remarkable. There are very few quarrels they are unable to patch up. Their skill seems to be based on long experience and a flair for grasping the core of problems rooted in the passions of human nature. They are supported by the reverence and esteem cultivated in the family circle for old age, which ensures attendance at their meetings and respect for their opinions. This kind of authority is even more important than the support they receive from the T'u-ssu. At the same time the fact that their meetings are public, and that the villagers can freely state their opinions and defend their rights puts pressure on the elders to act according to justice and in conformity with accepted opinion. Plaintiffs and de-

[P.796]

581 /6 cont'd/
589 as far as selling all that one possesses, one's lands, houses, and ani-
183 mals, and will live in indigence; at the death of the parents, the elder married sons, in the case where the possessions are about to be divided up, must, before all else, put aside the sums required for the marriage of the younger unmarried sons; the parents, at the approach of death, will feel the greatest relief in the fact that they have gotten all their sons married. In order to permit the poor to marry, recourse is had to all kinds of contrivances, which very often are only imposed by reason of their primordial goal, which is that of marriage, and which scorn many obligations which in "justice" would seem, at the least, to have to be taken into greater consideration. One will find decisions which will appear unjust, but when one studies this mental attitude, which gives proportion to everything, one will understand that among the T'ou-jen the other principles yield to it and are sacrificed.

554 Marriage, for the T'ou-jen people, is the great affair in life,
581 obligatory above all else. One is no longer an honorable man when one is not married; this is because they believe that man has the duty to live according to natural law, that is, to marry and procreate children.

623 One day one of my catechists was invited to sit with the elders
● 627 of the village to judge the case of a penniless young man who had
689 run off with a girl of good rank. They had been brought back after
588 an escapade of three years, with a child born during the flight.

The young man was on his knees, his hands tied behind his back, imploring the clemency of the judges and of the whole assembled village. /7/ Despairing, he was saying, of ever being able to marry because of his extreme poverty, he had believed it permissible to act in this way, in order to be able to do his duty and marry. "I have been unjust toward the girl's parents, but I submit myself in advance to make all the reparations possible that will be required of me...." The girl also cries for mercy: "I could have hoped for a better match," she admits, "but I followed this young man to be gracious; without me, he would never have been able to marry...."

681 After an important palaver the offending couple was punished, and the judges found a way to indemnify the injured family and to legalize this union.

/7 cont'd/

627 581 181 The argument of the judges, before the whole village and the families in question, is very instructive for us. The young man, they said, has not respected the customs of our race, furthermore, he has been unjust with respect to the girl's family; these are grave errors; after the principal accusers, tirades are heard on the necessity of marriage and the indigence of the unfortunate man; finally, he is excused by going back to the extreme obligation to marry. As for the girl, disobedience is censured and the rights of the parents are loudly proclaimed, but she was brave in offering the young man the chance to marry, for marriage is a duty.

We should scarcely admit such reasons; and so I remarked to my catechist and explained to him that in my opinion this was only the commonplace story of a couple who loved each other. "That is possible," he replied, "but it is certain that the young man thought above all of the duty of marriage, and it is poverty which induced him to leave with the girl; as for the girl, she was courageous." It was the same argument. I encountered therefore the same way of thinking in my catechist.

This case would probably be resolved in the same way in the West as in the East, that is to say the union would be legalized; but the motives which would be invoked would be completely different.

/8/ This fact was for me a revelation at the time, and I was able to verify it many times later; it made me acquainted with the T'ou-jen way of thinking on the subject of the general necessity for marriage.

2. Necessity for Male Descendants

858 562 181 581 Another mental habit among the T'ou-jen is an exclusive desire to see children born, and especially male children.

In Europe one is not too concerned when a family has no children or when there are only girls. Among the T'ou-jen the greatest of misfortunes is the absence of male children. It is necessary to be in the Orient to "live" the text of canon law: Matrimonii finis primarius est procreatio atque educatio prolis /"The primary purpose

585 /78 cont'd/
578 more being served to drink and without the distribution of the fare-
571 well gifts.

The next day the Peis got ready to bring an action before the t'ou-se. The customs had not been observed. /79/ the farewell gifts
[431] had not even been given, people had fought, etc.... The injured side demands indemnities for the injuries and apologies for the discourtesies.

[627] The elders of the region come to see the Peis and propose to settle the affair amicably. Negotiations...dinner...and practical conclusion: the Lis will make apologies and will offer a sheep to the Peis, then the two families will renew kin relationships.

After rounding this dangerous cape, they breathe again and quickly serve gin to distract their minds. Each one having taken his place again at the table, Chinese noodles are served to finish up.

585 The son-in-law's family invites its master of ceremonies to
431 distribute the farewell gifts. It is the pou fen tse /"supplementary shares"/ complement of the dinner. According to custom, they give to each person of a generation above that of the daughter-in-law eight loaves of bread and two pieces of meat. To the persons of the same generation and to those of lower generation they give four loaves of bread and one piece of meat. Then they think also of the persons who should have been present and who have excused themselves; they likewise prepare for them their loaves of bread and pieces of meat. In the evening at the moment of departure it is not rare to see the guests go away with one or two loads of bread and meat. It would be a discourtesy to refuse the gifts. They claim that formerly, at the moment of departure, the son-in-law's family used to give to the daughter-in-law's family "the lama's part." It consisted of two pieces of meat and eight loaves of bread, which were taken to the lamasery the next day.

The custom of asking for the lama's part has continued to exist in different places, but that of taking the gift to the lamasery has disappeared.

/94 cont'd/

587 the darkness they heard the woman affirm that they had been mistaken;
583 that she was a neighbor who had come to keep the widow company; that she was married and /95/ that her husband was very much alive, and that the person they were looking for had hidden behind a wardrobe at the moment of danger. Consternation!

What to do? Sending back the woman was a loss of face, and then she did not want to go back.

[627 684] The incident was known everywhere in the region from the next day on; the widow's parents and the husband of the abducted woman were already getting ready to bring suit against the woman's abductors. The elders of the village knew that it was a mistake and proposed to arrange the affair amicably.

There was a palaver and a dinner, which my catchist attended. The conclusion of the discussion was that the young wife was to be taken back on horseback with a band at the head of the procession and a salvo of firecrackers. A sheep with a scarf of red cloth on its horns was to be offered, and apologies were to be made. They laughed heartily in the region at the unfortunate nephew who had presided at the abduction of his aunt.... The young widow meanwhile was married to the man of her choice.

Another very interesting incident for understanding the T'ou-jen way of thinking on the subject of abduction and the conditions which permit it is the following:

A young widow of Pien-tan, after negotiations in due form, was taken at night to the home of a Tchao of Na-ling keou. Tchao, who was known for his avarice and had a very bad reputation, tried to pick a quarrel with the go-betweens on the subject of the widow's price, although the sum had already been agreed on. He wanted to be shrewd. Since the widow was at his house, he hoped to drag out the settlement of accounts and to get out of it by giving only part of it the agreed-upon price. After three weeks the matter was still dragging on, nothing had yet been paid, and consequently the contract had not yet been signed. New palaver in the courtyard of the pagoda two li distant from his house. Now in the absence of Tchao, a certain Tchang of Tong-keou, accompanied /96/ by several men

2: Schram--150 M-4, 5(1915-1920) 1932 AE9 Monguor AE9

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A. Divorce

586 Summary. -- 1. Right of divorce, theory and practice. 2. Causes of divorce. 3. Procedure.

1. Right of Divorce, Theory and Practice

Divorce among the T'ou-jen takes on a special character, that of the sale of the wife by the husband with her consent. The definition of divorce is fully realized in it: the dissolving of the marriage ties in view of the respective interests of the husband and wife.

[562] /135/ In theory the wife's right to separate from her husband and ask for divorce is not recognized; the reason for it is that the wife is considered as the pure and simple property of the husband who bought her. On the contrary, the husband's right, in theory, to send his wife away, to sell her with her consent, as well as to do it in spite of her, is recognized. Moreover, he has the right to repudiate her by sending her back to her parents.

[614] Although this theory has the force of law, I have nevertheless
627 known the case of a rich woman bringing suit through the head of the
586 clan, the t'ou-se, to obtain a divorce. An only daughter, when very young she had married a poor young man who had come to live at her home and serve her parents until their death. Now the husband-son-in-law in question was dissipating her fortune. The clans of the girl's mother and father as well as the elders of the village together presented a petition to the t'ou-se in which they confirmed the facts and asked the t'ou-se to grant the divorce. The divorce was granted. They based their argument on the fact that the wife had been given to the husband-son-in-law in exchange for the good services he was to render to the parents-in-law and the family; now he had not been faithful to his pledges....

586 The case of divorce occurs in practice in the following form: when the couple are no longer getting along, the wife has already found, in most cases, someone who wants to obtain her. If she has not yet found anyone, the husband will urge her to look for someone

/146 cont'd/

578 amuse herself... and has already had too many relations... one fine
593 day she disappears. This is the big affliction of the region. When a wife has run away, they immediately guess who her accomplice is; but it is necessary to be able to locate them. If the inquiries made about them are fruitless, after several days the son-in-law will go to his wife's family, pretending to believe that his dear better half is at their home and that he will find out about her return. This is also a way of informing the parents about their daughter's flight.

If after five or six months the fugitive has not come back, her parents require the son-in-law, accompanied by two aides, to go to get her at his expense; there is always some indication as to where she is. If they have exact information, they go to the headmen of the place to demand that they get hold of the fugitives so that they can bring them back home tied up.

684 Upon their return to the village, the village heads and the
627 members of the families of the lover and the wife are called. In the
681 presence of the whole populace, who very much relish this kind of distraction, the village heads begin the preliminary investigation of the affair. The case is examined to the bottom, and finally the lover is badly beaten and hung up by the thumbs until someone turns up who will act as guarantor for him. Then comes the woman, who is beaten on her bare back with leather lashes for as long as she does not manifest her regrets while adding good resolves for the future. Then the two culprits are taken through the village and exposed to the mockery of all; a herald precedes them, beating a drum and proclaiming their crime. It may happen that an indemnity on the part of the lover's family may be asked for the wrong done to the husband.

586 /147/ The wife goes back into the house; if she brings a child
681 born during the escapade, he is accepted into the family.

But it may also happen that the runaways are not found. Then after two or three years of vain search, the wife's parents demand a settlement of accounts. The parents-in-law then invite the parents of the runaway daughter-in-law, as well as her maternal uncles, the village heads, and several friends who are good speakers, for it will be a question of tseou che jen ming, i.e., "the indemnity (to the parents) for the loss of their daughter occasioned by her running away."

4: Schram M-S (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

A second fact is encountered in a publication of Ma Fu-hsiang.[37] For many years he was the most prominent official of Hsining engaged with Tibetan and Mongol affairs. Later, he became governor of Suiyüan Province and a member of the Meng-Tsang Yüan in Nanking. The passage from the publication states:

> More than 100 *li* southeast of Hsining, on the territory of the 'Ten Tribes,' is the Ami chü-lu mountain upon which was built the monastery of Sha-ch'ung which had more than 1,000 lamas. It was there that Tsong khapa had his hair clipped [entered religion], and remained for more than 10 years, starting his studies and religious life, before he went to Tibet (p. 198).

In 1906 the Chinese started digging for gold in the sacred mountain. The lamas, opposed to the digging, fought and two men were killed. The governor of the province ordered punishment to be imposed upon the lamasery with ruthless severity. Ma Fu-hsiang, being acquainted with the Tibetans, sought to settle the question amicably and went to Sha-ch'ung. The rebelling lamas and 1,000 soldiers of the "Ten Tribes" were determined to fight the Chinese troops. During the long period of discussion, the head of the lamasery repeated over and over that the lamasery and the mountain were hallowed places, because it was there that the founder of the Yellow Church had clipped his hair and remained for more than ten years. He protested that by digging at these spots the "artery" of the Yellow Church would be damaged, and the ruin of its religion be made inevitable (p. 190). Finally, as always in the Orient, a way was found to settle the case, by promising that no more digging would be done on the Sacred Mountain; but on the territory of the "Ten Tribes" digging would be allowed (p. 193). This fact gives evidence of the deep-seated conviction among the Tibetans about the veracity of the tradition and infers the existence of the lamasery at the time of the Yüan period (1280–1367). More traditions exist about monasteries having been built during the Yüan period, as related by the lamas, but they are vague and no names or specific places are indicated nor do ruins exist. However, it is not impossible that the traditions point to the hermitages noted in the *Blue Annals*. The building of the big monastery of Ta fo-ssu by one of the important T'u-ssu clans reveals the fact that Lamaism was a living entity among the T'u-ssu and their Monguors. Is it not too far-fetched to suppose that among the T'u-ssu only the Li T'u-ssu were Lamaist, since it is well known that the Ch'i and Lu T'u-ssu in 1644 were proprietors of monasteries constructed by them, although we do not know when they were constructed.[38] Besides, the facts that the monastery of Goorongbzan existed near Sha-ch'ung, and that in the beginning of the Ming a board of lamas was established, suggest the assumption that in Huang-chung during the Yüan period there probably must

[37] Ma Fu-hsiang, *Meng Tsang Chuang-k'uang*, Nanking, Chung-Hua yin-shu kung-ssu, 1931.

[38] *Annals* of Hsining, ch. 34, p. 3a.

[p.115(B)]

Finally, in 1885 the branch declared its independence and claimed to be possessor of the pasture and farm grounds and the forests formerly entrusted to its care by the mother monastery. A serious fight at close quarters occurred in the mother lamasery. 175 792 578

Ch'ü-t'an sued the branch to vindicate its rights of proprietor of all the domains of Ch'ü-t'an. The lawsuit was carried to the Court of Justice of the Subprefecture of Nien-pe and lasted for two years. The Chinese officials, lavishly bribed by both groups, finally sent the lawsuit to the Court of the Prefecture of Hsining in order that their friends and superiors might have the opportunity to acquire some wealth and promote the cause of justice. Again, the lamas stubbornly spent their money for two years. Still unwilling to accept the verdict of the judges, the suit was sent to the Supreme Court of the capital of the province. Here the Chinese officials were very happy to meet the interested customers, and the gullible lamas started immediately to sow again, seeds of wealth and happiness in the gardens of the highest officials. For sixteen years the clever officials kept the wheels turning, encouraging both groups, exciting passions and stubbornness, promising to both sides a successful conclusion. The gullible lamas spent money, and the officials milked the meek cows dry. Finally, the wealth of the mother lamasery was exhausted first, so that the branch lamasery won the suit. The branch, during all the trouble, relied on the forests, sold wood, and was in a more advantageous position to "defend its rights." Throughout this long period the Living Buddhas of Huang-chung tried several times to spread oil on the troubled waters and settle the question amicably, but to no avail. 691 792 662

The loss of face for the mother monastery was too humiliating. At night its lamas went to Yao-ts'ao-t'ai and burned its temples; the next day the lamas of Yao-ts'ao-t'ai went at noon to Ch'ü-t'an and burned the palaces of the Living Buddha and killed two lamas. In 1905 the two groups, both bled white, agreed to have the question settled by Living Buddhas. An indemnity was fixed for the two lamas who had been killed, and because the damage caused by the fires was considered to be equal, the problem was settled. 627 579

In 1915 there were 285 lamas at Yao-ts'ao-t'ai: at the mother monastery there were only fifty or sixty, most of them children. Five hundred and fifty lamas had left the mother monastery, with four minor Living Buddhas, because they had been compelled to contribute to the expenses caused by the suit, and to fulfill the corvées imposed in connection with it. The administration of the mother monastery, in former times so flourishing and wealthy, was reduced to a minimum. One lama administered the property, a precentor led the prayers in the temple, and all the other duties were fulfilled by the Living Buddha himself. The homes formerly occupied by the six hundred lamas were inhabited by Monguor, Tibetan, and Chinese families.

[P.24(A)]

tery in the most luxurious style. The head temple, with its gilt tiled roof, which had been preserved, was embellished and other temples rebuilt. He rebuilt a splendid palace for himself patterned after the most luxurious palaces in Peking. Chang-chia's Ch'ie-bzan was the wealthiest monastery in the country, with 150 lamas, 2 colleges, and 4 minor Living Buddhas. Most of its wealth was provided by Mongols, among whom the influence and prestige of Chang-chia was proverbial. 175 792 346

Every year, lama expeditions of Ch'ie-bzan traveled in Mongolia in order to collect alms. Chang-chia's prestige was so great that the Queen of the Torgots came to Ch'ie-bzan in 1913, to invite the intendant of the monastery to send an expedition among her tribesmen, for it had been a long time since an expedition had reached her country. I happened to be at Ch'ie-bzan in 1914 when the expedition returned. It had collected 3,000 sheep, 400 horses, and 280 camels, which were loaded with wool and skins. 175 794 648

The breach between T'u-kuan and Sumpa, which occurred in 1890, was more tragic. During the rebellion of the Moslems, Sumpa (born in 1854) had fled among the Mongols and Tibetans, north of Kukunor. He met with a Mongol girl, whom he had moved to his branch monastery called Sumpa-ssu. The lama community of Erh-ku-lung, after some years, could no longer stand the disrepute brought on the monastery. It brought [491] suit against Sumpa before the Amban in the prefectural city of Hsining, claiming he was not a genuine reincarnation. The lama community urged that he be erased from the list of Buddhas, and insisted on the right to search for the genuine reincarnation. For several months the lamas disturbed the whole city with the scandal, and spent money. The Chinese enjoyed all the incidents of the trial. Sumpa lost his face and honor irretrievably. Sumpa, however, was rich and the Amban venal. The Amban finally proposed that Sumpa leave Erh-ku-lung and move to one of his affiliates. This reincarnation (the third) of the illustrious Sumpa, having cut a sorry figure, never returned to Erh-ku-lung, but lived at his branch where, in 1916, his two girls delighted the old age of their father, who was sixty. His eldest daughter had married the son of the chief of the Aruk tribe. In 1916 the old man made a pilgrimage to Lhasa, and the lamas said he was atoning for his sins. No wonder that the Li-fan yüan records lacked information concerning the subsequent reincarnations of the Great Sumpa. 175 578 792

The Living Buddha Ch'ie-bzan of Erh-ku-lung having a branch monastery of his own, moved into it, appearing at Erh-ku-lung only to attend the festivals. The Living Buddha Wang lived in retired seclusion. Soon after the trial of Sumpa, the minor Living Buddha Tsung-tsa, one of the eleven, followed in the steps of Sumpa and established a family in Tsung-tsa. In the winter of the same year, the minor Living Buddha Seerting was taken and beaten at night by the husband and 175 792 627 762

[p.37(A)]

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

friends of a lady Seerting was "visiting." He was found the next morning hanging from a beam in his palace. The loss of face had been too tremendous. Erh-ku-lung had become a place of unrelieved misery. The year 1890 was one of the most fateful in the history of Erh-ku-lung.

After the withdrawal of Chang-chia Hutukhtu and Sumpa Hutukhtu, T'u-kuan became the actual omnipotent chief of the monastery, and acted and was recognized as such. Because it is customary to hush up dishonorable facts deliberately, Chang-chia and Sumpa were very seldom spoken about. It was a long time before I knew they had been the honored co-founders of the monastery.

The former glorious days of Erh-ku-lung vanished. There were no longer learned men at the monastery, which for a century had been the most celebrated center of learning in Huang-chung. Its renown for science passed to the now flourishing monastery of Labrang. The tragic departure of two of its glorious founders put a blight on it, and left a leaden atmosphere of gloom hovering over it. Troubles had succeeded each other. Kumbum, in the meantime, had made great strides, and became the most celebrated monastery of Huang-chung. It was visited by caravans of pilgrims from Mongolia and Tibet, which no longer cared for, or even paid a visit to Erh-ku-lung. Once at the top of the Lamaist world, Erh-ku-lung became a dim shadow of its former self, a second-rate monastery.

III. THE LAMASERIES IN HUANG-CHUNG

THE YELLOW SECT IN HUANG-CHUNG

This chapter will deal with the organization of the lamaseries in Huang-chung. The forty-two monasteries and branches situated north of the Hsining River were built according to the pattern of the old mother monastery of Erh-ku-lung. It seems obvious, therefore, to base the study on this initial institution, the most renowned and flourishing in former times. Because all the lamaseries of the Yellow Sect in Huang-chung have been organized on the same pattern, a general view of Lamaist institutions can thus be obtained.

The study is founded on facts collected during a stay of many years among the Monguors; which may give a better insight into the matter and reveal the trend of mind of the actors.

THE LAMASERIES OF HUANG-CHUNG INDEPENDENT OF LHASA

All the lamaseries in Huang-chung are autonomous units, independent of Lhasa both in matters of administration and appointment of superiors, even in matters of doctrine. The Achia Lamá defended the autonomy of Kumbum against the illegal interference of the Dalai Lama in 1908 by committing suicide. This energetic

[p. 37(B)]

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

among the intendancies and the impoverished lamas. Saddled with debts, and his plans not working out, he was compelled to give up his ambitious dreams and revert to the ancestral raft. 792 334

It is said that this holy man enjoyed the gift of bilocation. The people still state that many times many people saw him directing the shifts of blacksmiths and carpenters on the river, and at the same time saw him in ecstatic rapture in the temple.

It was after his financial collapse that he started the trouble with the disciple of his deceased intendant, which lasted for seven years, in order to retrieve his fortunes, only to land in jail in Seerkok. Finally, having debased his name and position of authority, he moved to one of his affiliates in the region of Kan-chou, where he was still living in 1920. Tenma was a typical figure in the world of Living Buddhas in 1910–1920.

COLLECTION OF ALMS IN FAR-OFF COUNTRIES

Expeditions to far-off countries are an important source of revenue. They last for several months and are organized by the various intendancies in their own behalf. Sometimes the supreme chief of a monastery accompanies the expedition. In 1914 T'u-kuan went to the region of the Yellow Tibetans (Uigurs) living around Su-chou. He left on the second of the second moon and was back at Erh-ku-lung in the tenth moon, with 124 cows, 146 horses, 90 sheep, and 2,000 taels. He seemed to be very happy when I visited him after the trip. During the troubles in 1940, T'u-kuan went to Mongolia, among the Urats, and traveled for four years. He visited me at Man-huei in Hou T'ao. He had a lot of trouble entering Hsining with 300 horses and 200 loaded camels because he was suspected of having had connections with the revolting Mongol, Te wang. 792 434 431

When I was in Kumbum in 1912 I met a returning expedition from Kukunor and Ts'aidam with 3,000 sheep, 260 horses, 140 cows, and loaded with butter, wool, skins, and yak hair. All the butchers from Hsining rushed to Kumbum to buy cheap cows and sheep. In December, 1914, I met a caravan of Kumbum returning from Kukunor and Ts'aidam with 6,000 sheep, 150 horses, and 200 cows. On the way they had lost 40 horses. They went to Hsining in order to bring suit against the chief of the tribe on whose territory the horses had been lost. The Amban settled the trouble in one session. He ordered that a kettle containing boiling oil be brought to him. Then he ordered both groups to grasp a one dollar piece he had thrown in the boiling oil. The lamas prostrated, apologized and implored for mercy, but the Tibetan chief tucked up his sleeves and went straight to the kettle. The gesture was sufficient for the Amban. The lamas received two hundred lashes, and were put into jail until a fine of two hundred dollars was brought to the court. [47] [p.45(B)]

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

roll of the inmates and from that time on he becomes a member of the community, and is able to reap the benefits of his membership. The same rule exists for admission to the colleges. 792

Nobody cares about the past of the newcomer, nobody inquires about the name of his country, his parents, or the reasons for his arrival. The lamas know very well that inquiries about these matters are of no avail, for if he were a dishonorable man he would certainly not reveal his past. Therefore, it suffices to say that you are coming to worship a certain Buddha honored at the lamasery, and that the period required to satisfy your devotion will probably be long, maybe a year, two years, or more. Then you have to try and find yourself a home in the lamasery, renting a room from a lama, or sharing a room. The proprietor of a courtyard has to report the names of the lamas living in his yard. In small institutions the control is easy, but in large ones, like Kumbum, it is impossible. Frequently, lamas assured me that there was always a number of non-registered lamas, mostly of the traveling businessman type, living at the homes of their friends.

Withdrawal from the lamasery is as easy. Every lama is free to abandon the lamasery forever, at any time. He has only to inform the intendancy of his departure. Only lamas who are guarantors for debts are not allowed to leave, as long as the business is unfinished. A lama is free to sell his courtyard to another lama, and to leave at any time. Usually, a number of lamas leave after the distribution of alms. Once a lama has left the monastery, it has no obligation to care for him any more, unless he has been a guarantor or has committed an injustice against the lamasery. The rector of Chiar-too-ssu, a branch of Erh-ku-lung, left the monastery, bought property adjacent to it, and without changing his lama dress for the clothes of a layman, lived with his wife unmolested. I encountered three or more lama doctors, celebrated for proficiency in their art, who lived with their wives, still wearing their religious garb. Even the son of one of them was dressed as a lama. [892]

If a lama whose name is inscribed on the rolls should be informed by his friends of a charge made against him at the intendancy for moral reasons or theft, he leaves the lamasery in time to avoid the punishments which are meted out with ruthless severity, and moves to another lamasery. Most of the time, a lama would be advised to leave by the intendency itself, for intendancies are reluctant to inflict such punishments, in order to avoid scandal.

In Kumbum, in 1912, I saw a lama, accused by a husband for visiting his wife, beaten unconscious before the main temple, while the community read imprecations. Half his face was blackened with soot; a paper hat, half black, half white, was put on his head; and the traditional oval was impressed on both his cheeks 792 627 ● 694 681

[p. 71 (B)]

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

with a burning ram's horn. He was carried outside the monastery wall by lamas. Ashes were spread all the way along in order to prevent his "spirit" from finding the way back to harm the lamasery. A large group of lamas followed. He was thrown on the ground, stripped of all his garments, amid the shouts of the lamas and the long blare of trumpets, and the group returned to the monastery without looking back. A round mark is burned on thieves. It is impossible for those so marked to enter any monastery.

792 627 694 681 [695]

At the time of the festival at Erh-ku-lung in 1912, three young lamas molested a young lady, causing her death. They fled the same night. The whole village of Too-long accused the monastery at Hsining, which was unable to trace the murderers and had to pay an indemnity of 3,000 taels, after spending far more at court. The whole country was bursting with righteous indignation. It was a tremendous loss of face for the lamasery.

792 684 682 [627]

Lamas not only lack the vow of obedience, but also the vow of poverty. It has been explained how lamas retain their own wealth and the means they use for increasing it.[27] Among the lamas are rich individuals enjoying a happy life, possessing a beautiful courtyard, clothed with silk and brocade, riding the finest horses and mules of the country, served by as many lamas as they wish, and there are poor individuals who have trouble making both ends meet—ill fed, ill clothed, working the whole day. Nobody takes care of them because wealth is a personal matter, and no vow of poverty exists. It has been explained how the lack of the vow of poverty is responsible in a large part for the loss of spirit in the monastic life, and how from this lack originate most of the vices encountered among the lamas and the ruination of monasteries.

792 511

Lamas lack the vow of chastity, for chastity reaches farther than celibacy. The Buddhists know this very well and the texts prove it.[28]

792 831

The reform of Tsong-khapa, the founder of the Yellow Sect, aimed at return to the traditional monastic life, based on celibacy and serious study. The sense of the necessity of celibacy still seems to prevail among the Monguor lamas. This assumption seems evidenced by the facts that the communities of lamas bring suit at Chinese courts against even supreme chiefs of lamaseries, and intendants who betray their vows, as was the case with the Living Buddhas Sumpa, Lu-chia, and Min-chu-erh, and even with Li, the intendant of the T'u-kuan Hutukhtu. It was the same with the Living Buddha Seerting who was caught red-handed by the

[185]

[27] The wealth possessed by a lama, his courtyard, etc. are inherited by his apprentice; in case he dies without having an apprentice, his wealth is sold by the intendancy; prayers are said by the lamas and alms given to them. If a lama who is proprietor of a courtyard marries, his courtyard is taken by the intendancy.

[28] L. de la Vallée Poussin, *Morale bouddhique*, 79, Paris, Librairie Nationale, 1927.

[p.72(A)]

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

Buddhas. The special *swork'a* or prayer honoring his deity is read by the lamas, and the Kurtain is proclaimed to be a genuinely possessed man. Then he is ordered to memorize his *swork'a* and to recite it before each performance, it being an invitation to his deity to descend into him.

Then follow the usual recommendations given to all Kurtains about continence on the day of a performance, not to act when his wife is giving birth and at mourning time, not to indulge in wine, to keep his weapons (sword, whip, and dagger) in a decent place and not to use them for other purposes; to give a performance at the monastery at the annual pageant time and in the families where his deity is specially honored, and always stress is put on the obligation to be loyal, honest, and dependable, so as not to cast a blight on the institution. Every time I heard this last recommendation, I remembered what the Monguors had said so many times, that among the Kurtains more dubious fellows are encountered than among the shamans, and for that reason the shamans are invited more by them than the Kurtains. They always added the story of the famous Kurtain of Toolong, which was seared in their mind. It seems really typical and sheds an unfavorable light on the institution.

Many years ago, the Kurtain of Toolong used to predict whether there would be outbreaks of arson in autumn when the crops were heaped upon the threshing floor. In this way he earned a pretty good living, because the crops of the people who had invited him for the performance of his rites were preserved and those of the incredulous people were burned at night. The whole country was really disturbed. However, suspicions arose and the arsonist was taken redhanded one night. He turned out to be the old father of the Kurtain. The chief and the elders of the village hung the old man by his thumbs from a tree and he received a well-deserved lashing to make him reveal the instigator of the arson. Reeling with dizziness and pain, welts and bruises all over his body, the father accused his son, and the Kurtain was hung up and tortured. The infuriated villagers came within a hair of killing him. His mandate of disciple of the spirit was gone forever. Such events are very prejudicial to the Kurtains. They cast a blemish on their group and are commented on all over the country for years, and so the saying goes that there are few good genuine Kurtains, and for that reason all have to be tested.[2]

Some of the Kurtains not only upset the villagers once in a while, but even land the monasteries in serious trouble. A fact well known in the country runs, that on the fifteenth of the first moon in 1914, the lamas of the important lamasery of Seerkok invited their Kurtain, possessed by the deity Kortong, to the ceremony carried out in honor of the deity, with great pomp and display.

[2] DeGroot, *op. cit.*, 1238, notes a similar case of a *Wu* arsonist.

(p.93(A))